

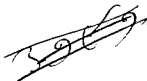
A FIRST BOOK
of
LYRICAL POETRY

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TREBLE & VALLINS

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OF
LYRICAL POETRY

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INTRODUCTION

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN PROSE AND VERSE

To see the outward difference between *prose* and *verse* we have only to turn over the pages of this book. This introduction is written in prose form; but the poems which follow it are all of them written in verse. Even if the book is held so far away that we cannot read the words, we can tell which is the prose and which the verse by the very form and arrangement of the printing. We might say, perhaps, that the prose runs straight on, but that the verse is measured out into lines that seem to have some definite length. That would be quite true. The first thing that strikes us about verse is its *measurement*. Probably we have often seen figures representing the length of the lines printed at the top of hymns in a hymn-book, like this :

7-7-7-7-

Oft in danger, oft in woe,
Onward, Christians, onward go;
Fight the fight, maintain the strife,
Strengthened with the bread of life.

Those four sevens tell us that the stanza contains four lines, each of which is seven syllables long. The syllable is the unit of measurement for verse, just as the inch is a unit of ordinary measurement. Knowing that, we can measure up a stanza for ourselves, by marking off the syllables. Let us take the first four lines of the poem on p. 41 :

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
A wet sheet and a flowing sea,							
1	2	3	4	5	6		
A wind that follows fast							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
And fills the white and rustling sail							
1	2	3	4	5	6		
And bends the gallant mast.							

The figures which represent the measure or *metre* of those lines are 8.6.8.6. It is just as simple a matter to find the metre of any other poem in the book.

But there is no reason, after all, why prose should not be printed in lines containing a definite number of syllables. Here is a sentence printed in measured lines :

This sentence is printed in
lines of a definite length,
each with seven syllables,
but it does not make a verse

It does not make a verse because metre is not the *real thing that distinguishes verse from prose*. There is something far more important. Some of the first verses we ever heard or said were nursery rhymes. When we said aloud or half-sang

Mary, Mary,
Quite contrary,
How does your garden grow ?

or

Old Mother Hubbard,
She went to the cupboard
To give her poor dog a bone,

or

" How many miles is it to Babylon ? "
" Threescore miles and ten, sir. "
" Can I get there by candle-light ? "
" Yes, and back again, sir. "

we marked in our voice the " beat " of the syllables which gave a " swing " to the lines; probably we

the words as we said them. We had found in verse that same swing or movement which makes us march in step to the sound of music. Certain syllables in the lines were *accented* or *stressed*, and the accent fell regularly, so that we could beat time to it. Perhaps we find, even now, that we fall into "sing-song" when we read verse. It is because of the regular occurrence of the accent. We can understand this perfectly if we read the following stanza, stressing hard the syllables which are marked :

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host of golden daffodils
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

There is no doubt about the regularity of the "beat." After that, if we read quite naturally, without over-stressing the marked syllables, we shall find that the "swing" still remains. It is part of the verse, and we cannot get away from it. We can mark it again, in another stanza :

Where the blackbird sings the latest,
Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest,
Where the nestlings chirp and flee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Here the beat falls just as regularly, though the lines have a different swing from those in the stanza about daffodils.

This regular "beat" of the stressed or accented syllables is called *rhythm*. There are accented syllables in prose—a fact we can prove for ourselves if we read this page aloud—but they do not fall regularly, so that the movement of prose is quite different from that of verse. We sometimes talk of the "lilt" of a song; and it is that "lilt" we have to put into our reading if we are to find in this book all the beauty that should be found. Mere "sing-song" we must rid ourselves of immediately; and try to find instead the natural movement of the voice to give a rhythm to the words. If we ignore this, we miss the real beauty of the sound of verse—the very thing that distinguishes it from prose. For verse is, after all, knit up with music; and music means the rhythm of a song, or the dancing of feet to the jig of an instrument. Even beyond that, we can find the deep idea of rhythm in Nature herself—the ebb and flow of the tides, the swaying of boughs in the wind, and the rippling of the brook

" That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune."

There is one other thing we usually think of in connection with verse. This is *rhyme*. We shall find that all the poems in this book are written in rhymed verse. Here is one taken at random, with the rhymes marked :

Full fathom five thy father *LIES* :
Of his bones are coral *made* ;
Those are pearls that were his *EYES* :
Nothing of him that doth *fade*
But doth suffer a sea-*CHANGE*
Into something rich and *STRANGE*.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his *knell* :
Hark ! now I hear them,—
Ding, dong, *bell*.

The words *lies—eyes, made—fade, change—strange,*

knell—bell, correspond in sound ; they make rhymes. Now while we know that most English verse is rhymed like that, we must never imagine that rhyme is really necessary to verse. To realise this fact perfectly we have only to read a few lines of *Hiawatha* :

He it was who carved the cradle
Of the little Hiawatha,
Carved its framework out of linden,
Bound it strong with reindeer sinews ;
He it was who taught him later
How to make his bows and arrows,
How to make the bows of ash-tree,
And the arrows of the oak-tree
So among the guests assembled
At my Hiawatha's wedding
Sat Iago, old and ugly,
Sat the marvellous story-teller.

There is rhythm in that, as we recognise when we read it aloud, or, better still, when we hear the beautiful music set to it by the great musician, Coleridge-Taylor. But it has no rhyme. Later on, when we study Shakespeare's plays, we shall find the same thing—that his verse has rhythm but nearly always no rhyme. We are therefore brought to the conclusion that rhyme is not an essential part of verse, like metre and rhythm, but is a kind of ornament that is not absolutely necessary. That is true : rhyme gives to verse a pleasant sound. It is not a necessary part of its music.

This is called a book of lyrical poetry. A lyric was originally a poem sung to the music of a lyre or a harp : so rhythm—the beat of a song—was in its very making. The lyric could not be separated from music : it was not spoken or written down, but sung. The song was made, in the beginning, out of the poet's own emotions—his joy, his sorrow, his love, his hate, his fear, his wonder. He fashioned into the words and music of a song such feelings as

we all have but cannot all express. Only the poet is able to put his emotion and imagination into the language of poetry. His eye lights upon a beautiful scene; he reads a story; he sees an interesting sight as he is out upon a journey. His imagination takes hold of such things as these, and out of it all there comes a poem. One poet sees the daffodils on a windy day, another hears the nightingale singing; one watches an old donkey in a field, another catches a glimpse of a little boat sailing home in the moonlight,

"Silver sails all out of the west."

We, too, have seen and heard such things; yet while they have perhaps stirred us with joy or wonder or grief, we have not been able to express our feeling in words. But the poet can. Long ago poets were called the *makers* (the word 'poet' means maker), because out of the thoughts that at some time or other come to us all they were able to *make* a beautiful thing in word and sound. Only a few of us can be *makers*. Daffodils in the wind will always stir some emotion within us; but only Shakespeare, the maker, could give us the poem about

"Daffodils

That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty."

When we read a true poem we say to ourselves: "I have often thought that. Why shouldn't I have written that myself?" The reason is because the poet's thought and feeling may be exactly the same as our own; but whereas we can get no further than the thought, the poet has been able to *make* his feeling into a poem.

It is important to remember these few simple things as we read this book of lyrics. If we try to think with the poet, and remember that, even if we cannot make poetry as he does, at least we may

have somewhere deep down within us the feelings that inspire poetry, then this book and every other book of poetry will lead us into an enchanted land. For perhaps somewhere in it we shall be able to trace our own thoughts and ideas : then we shall recognise how some ordinary feeling that may be ours can be fashioned by the *maker* into beauty and music.

So let us get to the poems, and read them, as poetry always should be read, in the strength of our own imagination. It is best to speak them aloud, trying all the time to feel the rhythm of the verse, and the musical sound of the words. But that is only the first step to real appreciation ; we must never stop there. The second step we have to take quite alone, without the aid of book or teacher. No one can make us like a poem. Somehow, we have to try to see with the poet's eyes and hear with his ears ; to find the secret of his imagination. It is no use just reading poetry as an exercise ; we must feel it also. Unless we do that most of our study of this book will be in vain.

I. AND SHALL TRELAWNY DIE?

Sir Jonathan Trelawny was one of the Seven Bishops tried for sedition in the reign of James II. His fellow Cornishmen marched towards London to force his liberation from the Tower.

A GOOD sword and a trusty hand,
A merry heart and true :
King James's men shall understand
What Cornish lads can do.

And have they fixed the where and when?
And shall Trelawny die?
Here's twenty thousand Cornish men
Will know the reason why !

Out spake their captain brave and bold,
A merry wight was he :
" If London Tower were Michael's hold,
We'll set Trelawny free !

" We'll cross the Tamar, land to land—
The Severn is no stay—
With ' one and all,' and hand in hand,
And who shall bid us nay ?

" And when we come to London Wall,
A pleasant sight to view,
Come forth ! come forth ! ye cowards all ;
Here's men as good as you.

" Trelawny he's in keep and hold,
Trelawny he may die ;
But here's twenty thousand Cornish bold
Will know the reason why ! "

ROBERT STEPHEN HAWKER.

Questions.

1. What do you know of the Trial of the Seven Bishops? Read what you can about it in your history books.

2. There is a note of *defiance* in this poem. Show how the poet has emphasised such a note by (a) direct questions, (b) exclamations, (c) repetition.

3. Where is the Tamar? the Severn? Why is the Severn mentioned in the poem?

2. THE BRITISH SOLDIER IN CHINA

LAST night among his fellow-roughs
 He jested, quaff'd, and swore :

A drunken private of the Buffs
 Who never look'd before.

To-day, beneath the foeman's frown,
 He stands in Elgin's place,

Ambassador from Britain's crown,
 And type of all her race.

Poor, reckless, rude, low-born, untaught,
 Bewilder'd, and alone,

A heart, with English instinct fraught,
 He yet can call his own.

Ay ! tear his body limb from limb ;
 Bring cord, or axe, or flame !—

He only knows, that not through him
 Shall England come to shame.

Far Kentish hopfields round him seem'd
 Like dreams to come and go ;

Bright leagues of cherry-blossom gleam'd,
 One sheet of living snow :

The smoke above his father's door
 In grey soft eddyings hung :—

Must he then watch it rise no more
 Doom'd by himself, so young ?

Yes, Honour calls !—with strength like steel
 He puts the vision by :

Let dusky Indians whine and kneel ;
 An English lad must die !

And thus, with eyes that would not shrink,
 With knee to man unbent,

Unflinching on its dreadful brink
 To his red grave he went.

—Vain, mightiest fleets of iron framed;
Vain, those all-shattering guns;
Unless proud England keep, untamed,
The strong heart of her sons!
So, let his name through Europe ring—
A man of mean estate
Who died, as firm as Sparta's king,
Because his soul was great.

SIR FRANCIS HASTINGS DOYLE.

Questions.

1. Do you think this poem has a good title? Could you suggest a better one?
2. Why was the private of the Buffs "Ambassador from Britain's crown"? "The Buffs" are a Kentish regiment. What part of the poem reminds you of this?
3. Do you know of any incident during the Great War that can compare with this one?
4. Suppose you were saying this poem as a recitation. How would you recite stanzas 2 and 3?

3. TWO POEMS OF KINGSLEY

"The Sands of Dee" and "The Three Fishers" are both sad poems of river and sea. They are like ballads in that they leave half the tale to our imagination. Into these two poems Charles Kingsley has put some of that picturesque description which charms us also in *Westward Ho!* and *The Heroes*.

(i) THE THREE FISHERS

THREE fishers went sailing away to the west,
 Away to the west as the sun went down;
 Each thought on the woman who loved him the best,
 And the children stood watching them out of the town;

For men must work, and women must weep,
 And there's little to earn, and many to keep,
 Though the harbour bar be moaning.

Three wives sat up in the lighthouse tower,
 And they trimmed the lamps as the sun went down;

They looked at the squall, and they looked at the shower,

And the night-rack came rolling up ragged and brown;

But men must work, and women must weep,
 Though storms be sudden, and waters deep,
 And the harbour bar be moaning.

Three corpses lay out on the shining sands,
 In the evening gleam, as the sun went down,
 And the women are weeping and wringing their hands,

For those who will never come back to the town.

For men must work, and women must weep,

And the sooner 'tis over, the sooner to sleep;

And good-bye to the bar and its moaning.;

—CHARLES KINGSLEY.

Questions.

1. What do you take to be (a) the most picturesque, (b) the saddest, line in the poem? What do you notice about the last line in each stanza?

2. There are three *pictures* in the poem. Give a title to each of them.

(ii) THE SANDS OF DEE

" O Mary, go and call the cattle home,—
And call the cattle home,
And call the cattle home
Across the sands o' Dee ! "

(The western wind was wild and dark wi' foam,)
And all alone went she.

The creeping tide came up along the sand,
And o'er and o'er the sand,
And round and round the sand,
As far as eye could see.

The blinding mist came down and hid the land :
And never home came she.

" Oh, is it weed, or fish, or floating hair—
A tress o' golden hair,
O' drowned maiden's hair,
Above the nets at sea ? "

Was never salmon yet that shone so fair
Among the stakes on Dee.

They row'd her in across the rolling foam,
The cruel crawling foam,
The cruel hungry foam,
To her grave beside the sea :

But still the boatmen hear her call the cattle home,
Across the sands o' Dee.

CHARLES KINGSLEY.

Questions.

1. Does the poet actually tell us that Mary was drowned? How does he make us think she was?

2. How has the poet made his poem mournful?

3. What legend is referred to? Do you know any other legend of the sea or the river?

4. ROSABELLE

This poem is a *ballad*, that is, a poem in which a story is sung as if by a minstrel in the olden days. The minstrel usually told only half the tale : the other half he left to the imagination of the listeners. So a ballad is usually a poem of the half-told tale. Sir Walter Scott, who wrote this poem, loved to tell in prose or verse stories of love and war.

O LISTEN, listen, ladies gay !
 No haughty feat of arms I tell ;
 Soft is the note, and sad the lay,
 That mourns the lovely Rosabelle.—

" Moor, moor the barge, ye gallant crew !
 And, gentle lady, deign to stay !
 Rest thee in Castle Ravensheuch,
 Nor tempt the stormy firth to-day.

" The blackening wave is edged with white :
 To inch and rock the sea-mews fly ;
 The fishers have heard the Water-Sprite,
 Whose screams forebode that wreck is nigh

" Last night the gifted Seer did view
 A wet shroud swathed round lady gay ;
 Then stay thee, Fair, in Ravensheuch :
 Why cross the gloomy firth to-day ? "

" 'Tis not because Lord Lindesay's heir
 To-night at Roslin leads the ball,
 But that my ladye-mother there
 Sits lonely in her castle-hall.

" 'Tis not because the ring they ride,
 And Lindesay at the ring rides well,
 But that my sire the wine will chide,
 If 'tis not fill'd by Rosabelle."—

O'er Roslin all that dreary night
 A wondrous blaze was seen to gleam;
 'Twas broader than the watch-fire's light,
 And redder than the bright moonbeam.

It glared on Roslin's castled rock,
 It ruddied all the copse-wood glen;
 'Twas seen from Dryden's groves of oak,
 And seen from cavern'd Hawthornden.

Seem'd all on fire that chapel proud,
 Where Roslin's chiefs uncollin'd lie,
 Each Baron, for a sable shroud,
 Sheathed in his iron panoply.

Seem'd all on fire within, around,
 Deep sacristy and altar's pale;
 Shone every pillar foliage-bound,
 And glimmer'd all the dead men's mail.

Blazed battlement and pinnet high,
 Blazed every rose-carved buttress fair—
 So still they blaze, when fate is nigh
 The lordly line of high St. Clair.

There are twenty of Roslin's barons bold
 Lie buried within that proud chapel;
 Each one the holy vault doth hold—
 But the sea holds lovely Rosabelle!

And each St. Clair was buried there,
 With candle, with book, and with knell;
 But the sea-caves rung, and the wild winds sung,
 The dirge of lovely Rosabelle.

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

QUESTIONS.

1. How does the poet give you the idea that a minstrel is singing this poem?

2. Would you call this poem "a half-told tale"? What parts of it are left to your imagination? Tell the full story in your own words.

3. What phrases or words in the poem give you an idea of (i) stormy weather, (ii) weirdness, (iii) landscape?

4. Compare this poem with the one on the next page. Which do you like the better?

5. BRIGNALL BANKS

This is another of Sir Walter Scott's ballads. If you read *Rosabelle* and this one together you will notice a likeness in the language and what is called the "atmosphere" of the two poems.

O, BRIGNALL banks are wild and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there,
Would grace a summer queen :
And as I rode by Dalton Hall,
Beneath the turrets high,
A Maiden on the castle wall
Was singing merrily :—

"O, Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green !
I'd rather rove with Edmund there
Than reign our English Queen."

"H, Maiden, thou wouldst wend with me
To leave both tower and town,
Thou first must guess what life lead we,
That dwell by dale and down :
And if thou canst that riddle read,
As read full well you may,
Then to the green-wood shalt thou speed
As blithe as Queen of May."

Yet sung she, "Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are green !
I'd rather rove with Edmund there
Than reign our English Queen.

"I read you by your bugle horn
And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a Ranger sworn
To keep the King's green-wood."

" A Ranger, Lady, winds his horn,
And 'tis at peep of light ;
His blast is heard at merry morn,
And mine at dead of night."

Yet sung she, " Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are gay !
I would I were with Edmund there,
To reign his Queen of May !

" With burnish'd brand and musketoon
So gallantly you come,
I read you for a bold Dragoon,
That lists the tuck of drum."
" I list no more the tuck of drum,
No more the trumpet hear ;
But when the beetle sounds his hum,
My comrades take the spear.

" And O ! though Brignall banks be fair,
And Greta woods be gay,
Yet mickle must the maiden dare,
Would reign my Queen of May !

" Maiden ! a nameless life I lead,
A nameless death I'll die ;
The fiend whose lantern lights the mead
Were better mate than I !
And when I'm with my comrades met
Beneath the green wood tough,
What once we were we all forget,
Nor think what we are now."

Chorus. Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather flowers there,
Would grace a summer queen.

SIX WALTER SCOTT.

Questions.

1. What is the subject of this poem? Who is the chief knight of the green-wood in the old stories? What do you know of him?

2. "But when the beetle sounds his hum,
My comrades take the spear."

What is the meaning of these two lines?

3. Old and strange words are often used in ballads. Find any words strange to you in this poem and in *Rosabelle*. What do they mean?

4. Do you think this poem would go well to music?

6. LORD ULLIN'S DAUGHTER

This is another ballad, a story in verse by the man who wrote *Ye Mariners of England*. It is a stirring tale of love, wind, storm and revenge

A CHIEFTAIN to the Highlands bound
Cries " Boatman, do not tarry,
And I'll give thee a silver pound
To row us o'er the ferry ! "

" Now who be ye would cross Lochgyle,
This dark and stormy water ? "

" Oh I'm the chief of Ulva's isle,
And this, Lord Ullin's daughter.

" And fast before her father's men
Three days we've fled together,
For should he find us in the glen,
My blood would stain the heather.

" His horsemen hard behind us ride—
Should they our steps discover,
Then who will cheer my bonny bride
When they have slain her lover ? "

Out spoke the hardy Highland wight,
" I'll go, my chief, I'm ready :
It is not for your silver bright,
But for your winsome lady :—

" And by my word ! the bonny bird
In danger shall not tarry ;
So though the waves are raging white)
I'll row you o'er the ferry."

By this the storm grew loud apace,
The water-wraith was shrieking ;
And in the scowl of heaven each face
Grew dark as they were speaking.

But still as wilder blew the wind
And as the night grew drearer,
Adown the glen rode armed men,
Their trampling sounded nearer.

"O haste thee, haste!" the lady cries,
"Though tempests round us gather;
I'll meet the raging of the skies,
But not an angry father."

The boat has left a stormy land,
A stormy sea before her,—
When, O! too strong for human hand
The tempest gathered o'er her.

And still they row'd amidst the roar
Of waters fast prevailing :
Lord Ullin reach'd that fatal shore,—
His wrath was changed to wailing.

For, sore dismay'd, through storm and shade
His child he did discover :—
One lovely hand she stretch'd for aid,
And one was round her lover.

"Come back! come back!" he cried in grief,
"Across this stormy water :
And I'll forgive your Highland chief,
My daughter!—O my daughter!"

'Twas vain : the loud waves lash'd the shore,
Return or aid preventing :
The waters wild went o'er his child,
And he was left lamenting.

THOMAS CAMPBELL.

Questions.

1. In what ways does this poem remind you of the following poems?—(a) *The Wreck of the Marjorie*,

(b) *The Sands of Dee*, (c) *And shall Treloarny die?*
(d) *Lochinvar*.

2. What adjective could you find to describe this poem? How does a story poem of action like this differ from a poem like *The Daffodils* (p. 48)?

3. Which lines of the poem print the scene indelibly on the eye?

7. THE DESTRUCTION OF SENNACHERIB

This is a fine stirring version of an old Bible story. Lord Byron was greater even than Sir Walter Scott at telling a story in verse. Later on we shall read his stanzas which describe the eve of the Battle of Waterloo and the battle itself. We can then make some comparison of the two poems.

I

THE Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,
And his cohorts were gleaming in purple and gold;
And the sheen of their spears was like stars on the
sea,
When the blue wave rolls nightly on deep Galilee.

II

Like the leaves of the forest when Summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen -
Like the leaves of the forest when Autumn hath
blown,
That host on the morrow lay wither'd and strown.

III

For the Angel of Death spread his wings on the
blast,
And breathed in the face of the foe as he pass'd;
And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever grew
still!

IV

And there lay the steed with his nostril all wide,
But through it there roll'd not the breath of his
pride;
And the foam of his gasping lay white on the turf,
And cold as the spray of the rock - beating turf,

V

And there lay the rider distorted and pale,
 With the dew on his brow, and the rust on his
 mail :

And the tents were all silent, the banners alone,
 The lances unlifted, the trumpet unblown.

VI

And the widows of Ashur are loud in their wail,
 And the idols are broke in the Temple of Baal;
 And the might of the Gentile, unsmote by the sword,
 Hath melted like snow in the glance of the Lord !

LORD BYRON.

Questions.

1. Find in the Old Testament the story on which this poem is based.
2. In the second stanza there are two "likenesses." Do they seem vivid to you? Could you think of better ones?
3. By what little pictures does the poet give you the idea of the destruction of Sennacherib?
4. What do you notice about the rhythm of this poem? (Read the introduction.)

8. KEITH OF RAVELSTON

All the sadness and the incompleteness of the ballad are illustrated in this poem. In particular the refrain gives the half-told tale an atmosphere of mournfulness and mystery.

The murmur of the mourning ghost
That keeps the shadowy kine,
" Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line ! "

Ravelston, Ravelston,
The merry path that leads
Down the golden morning hill,
And thro' the silver meads;

Ravelston, Ravelston,
The stile beneath the tree,
The maid that kept her mother's kine,
The song that sang she !

She sang her song, she kept her kine,
She sat beneath the thorn,
When Andrew Keith of Ravelston
Rode thro' the Monday morn.

His henchmen sing, his hawk-bells ring,
His belted jewels shine !
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line !

Year after year, where Andrew came,
Comes evening down the glade,
And still there sits a moonshine ghost
Where sat the sunshine maid.

Her misty hair is faint and fair,
She keeps the shadowy kine;
Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
The sorrows of thy line !

I lay my hand upon the stile,
 The stile is lone and cold;
 The burnie that goes babbling by
 Says naught that can be told.

Yet, stranger I here, from year to year,
 She keeps her shadowy kine;
 Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
 The sorrows of thy line!

Step out three steps, where Andrew stood—
 Why blanch thy cheeks for fear?
 The ancient stile is not alone,
 'Tis not the burn I hear!

She makes her immemorial moan,
 She keeps her shadowy kine;
 Oh, Keith of Ravelston,
 The sorrows of thy line!

SYDNEY DOBELL.

Questions.

1. Who was (a) Keith of Ravelston; (b) the maid? Can you reconstruct the story from the poem?
2. What is the refrain of the poem? Why does it make the poem effective?
3. Is there any reason for the mention of the *stile* and the *burn* in the poem?



Her timbers yet are sound,
And she may float again,
Full charg'd with England's thunder,
And plough the distant main;

But Kempenfelt is gone,
His victories are o'er;
And he and his eight hundred
Must plough the wave no more.

WILLIAM COWPER.

Questions.

1. Rewrite this poem in prose as simply and clearly as you can.

2. Which of the three following is the *centre* or *real subject* of this poem?—*The Royal George*; *Kempenfelt*; *The eight hundred men*.

3. Do you prefer this poem to the poem of Tennyson's in which six hundred men "rode into the valley of Death"? Give a reason with your answer.

2. This poem is called a *song*. Do you think it could be set to music?

3. Which stanza in this poem do you like least? What is your reason for thinking it less attractive than the others?

4. "The seasons have got mixed up in this poem. Do you agree with this statement?"

The worts, the purslain
 Of watercress,
 Which of Thy kindness
 And my content
 Makes those, and my be-
 To be more sweet.

All this, and better, dost
 Me for this end :
 That I should render for
 A thankful heart,
 Which, fired with incense, i
 As wholly Thine :
 But the acceptance—that i
 O Lord, by Thee.

R

Questions.

1. Read the poem carefully, and his everyday life Herrick describes in "
2. What do you mean when you "quaint"? What quaint phrases do you find in this poem?
3. Write a list of *ten* things that n every day. Try to write a little about . paragraph.
4. From this poem and those printed what kind of man would you picture H! been?

12. A SEA SONG

Storm and wind sing through this rollicking song of the days of England's "Hearts of Oak." The very rhythm of the poem *rocks* like the storm-tossed ship.

A WER sheet and a flowing sea,
A wind that follows fast
And fills the white and rustling sail
And bends the gallant mast;
And bends the gallant mast, my boys,
While like the eagle free
Away the good ship flies, and leaves
Old England on the lee.

O for a soft and gentle wind !
I heard a fair one cry ;
But give to me the snoring breeze
And white waves heaving high ;
And white waves heaving high, my lads,
The good ship tight and free—
The world of waters is our home,
And merry men are we.

There's tempest in yon hornéd moon,
And lightning in yon cloud ;
But hark the music, mariners !
The wind is piping loud ;
The wind is piping loud, my boys,
The lightning flashes free—
While the hollow oak our palace is,
Our heritage the sea.

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM.

Questions.

1. What kind of man is singing this song? When did he live, do you think?

2. What does the poet mean by "a wind that follows fast"; "snoring breeze"; "yon hornéd moon"; "the hollow oak"; "the wind is piping"?

3. Do you know of any description in verse or prose of a rough sea?

✓
13. HUNTING SONG

There is a *sound* in this song like the hunter's horn, that wakes the early morning echoes. It reminds us of another hunter—John Peel—who would "awaken the dead" as he rode "in his coat so gay."

WAKEN, lords and ladies gay !
On the mountain dawns the day ;
All the jolly chase is here
With hawk and horse and hunting-spear ;
Hounds are in their couples yelling,
Hawks are whistling, horns are knelling,
Merrily merrily mingle they,
" Waken, lords and ladies gay ! "

Waken, lords and ladies gay !
The mist has left the mountain grey,
Springlets in the dawn are steaming,
Diamonds on the brake are gleaming ;
And foresters have busy been
To track the buck in thicket green ;
Now we come to chant our lay,
" Waken, lords and ladies gay ! "

Waken, lords and ladies gay !
To the greenwood haste away ;
We can show you where he lies,
Fleet of foot and tall of size ;
We can show the marks he made
When 'gainst the oak his antlers fray'd ;
You shall see him brought to bay ;
" Waken, lords and ladies gay ! "

Louder, louder chant the lay,
Waken, lords and ladies gay !
Tell them youth and mirth and glee
Run a course as well as we ;

A FIRST BOOK

Time, stern huntsman ! who can balk,
Stanch as hound and fleet as hawk ;
Think of this, and rise with day,
Gentle lords and ladies gay !

SIR WALTER SCOTT

Questions.

1. How would you try to read this poem aloud ?
2. What in this poem makes you feel all the time it is a song of the early morning ?
3. There are many songs and poems and tales in English about hunting. Could you give a reason for this ?

14. THREE MEN OF GOTHAM

An old nursery rhyme is the "text" of this poem, which is really a merry drinking song.

SEAMEN three! What men be ye?
Gotham's three wise men we be.
Whither in your bowl so free?
To rake the moon from out the sea.
The bowl goes trim. The moon doth shine.
And our ballast is old wine.
And your ballast is old wine.

Who art thou, so fast adrift?
I am he they call Old Care.
Here on board we will thee lift.
No: I may not enter there.
Wherefore so? 'Tis Jove's decree,
In a bowl Care may not be.
In a bowl Care may not be.

Fear ye not the waves that roll?
No: in charmed bowl we swim.
What the charm that floats the bowl?
Water may not pass the brim.
The bowl goes trim. The moon doth shine.
And our ballast is old wine.
And your ballast is old wine.

THOMAS LOVE PEACOCK.

Questions.

1. Write the nursery rhyme on which this poem is founded. With it write down three of the best nursery rhymes you know.

15. TWO POEMS OF WORDSWORTH

Wordsworth has told us in these poems of two different experiences he had when he was out walking. One day, in harvest-time, he saw a woman reaping in a field, and heard her singing. Her song remained with him and reminded him "of old unhappy far-off things." But another day he saw the daffodils dancing and tossing in the winds of March; and they filled him with their own happiness and glee.

(i) THE REAPER

BEHOLD her, single in the field,
Yon solitary Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing by herself;
Stop here, or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds the grain,
And sings a melancholy strain;
O listen! for the vale profound
Is overflowing with the sound.

No nightingale did ever chant
More welcome notes to weary bands
Of travellers in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er was heard
In spring-time from the cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the seas
Among the farthest Hebrides.

Will no one tell me what she sings?
Perhaps the plaintive numbers flow
For old, unhappy, far-off things,
And battles long ago:
Or is it some more humble lay,
Familiar matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow, loss, or pain,
That has been, and may be again?

And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

Questions.

1. Read the poem called *To Daffodils* on p. 50. How does it differ from this one? Which do you think the better poem?
2. Write down some thoughts of your own on seeing (i) a bank of violets, (ii) bluebells in a wood, (iii) a bush of wild roses.
3. Can you suggest a subject for the reaper's song? Do you know of some sad song she might have been singing?
4. Which do you consider to be the four best lines of *The Reaper*? State your reasons for choosing them.
5. Why does the poet speak of a nightingale among Arabian sands, and a cuckoo in the far-off Hebrides?
6. What word occurs in each stanza of *The Daffodils*? Can you suggest a reason for the repetition?

Whether of the theme, the maiden sing
 As if her song could have no ending;
 I saw her singing at her work,
 And o'er the sickle bending,
 I listened long and long and still,
 And, as I counted up the hill,
 The name in my heart I bore,
 Long after it was heard no more.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

(a) THE DAFFODILS

I was ~~and~~ ^{and} lonely as a cloud
 That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
 When all at once I saw a crowd,
 A host, of golden daffodils,
 Peeping the like, beneath the trees,
 Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
 And twinkle on the milky way,
 They stretched in never-ending line
 Along the margin of a bay:
 Ten thousand saw I at a glance
 Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
 Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:
 A Poet could not but be gay
 In such a jocund company!
 I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
 What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
 In vacant or in pensive mood,
 They flash upon that inward eye
 Which is the bliss of solitude;

And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH.

Questions.

1. Read the poem called *To Daffodils* on p. 50. How does it differ from this one? Which do you think the better poem?
2. Write down some thoughts of your own on seeing (i) a bank of violets, (ii) bluebells in a wood, (iii) a bush of wild roses.
3. Can you suggest a subject for the reaper's song? Do you know of some sad song she might have been singing?
4. Which do you consider to be the four best lines of *The Reaper*? State your reasons for choosing them.
5. Why does the poet speak of a nightingale among Arabian sands, and a cuckoo in the far-off Hebrides?
6. What word occurs in each stanza of *The Daffodils*? Can you suggest a reason for the repetition?

16. TO DAFFODILS

Wordsworth saw the daffodils, and they made him feel happy and glad (p. 48). But Robert Herrick thought only of their short stay, which reminded him of the fleeting life of men and women, and made him grieve that the daffodils "basted away so soon."

FAIR Daffodils, we weep to see
 You haste away so soon :
 As yet the early-rising Sun
Has not attain'd his noon.
Stay, stay,
 Until the hasting day
 Has run
 But to the even-song;
 And, having pray'd together, we
 Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you,
 We have as short a Spring;
 As quick a growth to meet decay
 As you, or any thing.
 We die,
 As your hours do, and dry
 Away
 Like to the Summer's rain;
 Or as the pearls of morning's dew,
 Ne'er to be found again.

ROBERT HERRICK.

Questions.

1. Is there anything in this poem which would tell you that its author was a clergyman? When do you think he saw the daffodils?
2. Imagine and write down the answer of the daffodils.

17. TO MEADOWS

This is another poem by the poet who wrote *To Daffodils*. It is interesting to see that the meadows with their lost and faded flowers fill him with the same thoughts as the daffodils that pass so soon.

YE have been fresh and green,
Ye have been fill'd with flowers,
And ye the walks have been
Where maids have spent their hours,

Ye have beheld how they
With wicker arks did come
To kiss and bear away
The richer cowslips home.

You've heard them sweetly sing,
And seen them in a round :
Each virgin, like a Spring,
With honeysuckles crown'd.

But now we see none here
Whose silvery feet did tread,
And with dishevelled hair
Adorn'd this smoother mead.

Like unthrifths, having spent
Your stock, and needy grown,
You're left here to lament
Your poor estates, alone.

ROBERT HERRICK.

Questions.

1. At what time of the year do you suppose this poem was written? Give a reason for your answer.

2. Do you think you could tell from reading this poem and *To Daffodils* that Herrick was a country poet?

3. What is meant by "wicker arks"; "in a round"; "dishevelled hair"?

4. Try to put into a prose paragraph of your own the meaning of the last two stanzas.

✓ 18. TWO POEMS OF BROWNING

Browning has two distinct thoughts of England. Away in Italy, he remembers the sweetness and homeliness of her April; in the Mediterranean, near the symbols of her power, Gibraltar and Trafalgar, he thinks with pride of her glory among the nations.

✓ (i) HOME THOUGHTS FROM ABROAD

OH, to be in England
Now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England
Sees, some morning, unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf, *have not*
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough *1311*
In England—now!

And after April, when May follows,
And the whitethroat builds, and all the swallows!
Hark, where my blossom'd pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—
That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice
over,

Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!
And though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower
—Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

ROBERT BROWNING.

Questions.

1. Are the various things that Browning mentions in this poem really true? Have you ever seen them in England? Does the thrush really sing his song twice over?

2. What does the last line mean? (Remember that Browning was in Italy when he wrote the poem.)

✓ (ii) HOME THOUGHTS FROM THE SEA

NOBLY, nobly Cape Saint Vincent to the North-west
died away;

Sunset ran, one glorious blood-red, reeking into
Cadiz Bay;

Bluish 'mid the burning water, full in face Trafalgar
lay;

In the dimmest North-east distance dawn'd Gibraltar
grand and gray;

" Here and here did England help me : how can I
help England? "—say,

Whoso turns as I, this evening, turn to God to
praise and pray,

While Jove's planet rises yonder, silent over Africa.

ROBERT BROWNING.

Questions.

1. What words or phrases in this poem strike you as being particularly *vivid* or *picturesque*?

2. Why does Browning mention particularly Cape St. Vincent, Cadiz Bay, Trafalgar, and Gibraltar in this poem?

3. How would you pronounce the word *Africa* in the last line?

19. IF I HAD BUT TWO LITTLE WINGS

On pp. 81, 82 there are two passages from *The Ancient Mariner*, a very famous poem by the man who wrote these three simple stanzas. Coleridge was a poet full of imagination and of such dreams as he describes here. He tells us that he actually dreamt the words of one of his best poems, *Kubla Khan*.

IF I had but two little wings,
And were a little feathery bird,
To you I'd fly, my dear !
But thoughts like these are idle things,
And I stay here.

But in my sleep to you I fly :
I'm always with you in my sleep ;
The world is all one's own.
But then one wakes, and where am I ?
All, all alone.

Sleep stays not, though a monarch bids :
So I love to wake ere break of day :
For though my sleep be gone,
Yet, while 'tis dark, one shuts one's lids,
And still dreams on.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

Questions.

1. " I'm always with you in my sleep ;
The world is all one's own."

What does the poet mean by these two lines? Why is he lonely when he wakes?

2. Notice that all the words and phrases in this poem are very simple. Could you improve the poem by altering any one of them? Do you think *simple* words and language are the best for poetry?

20. TWO POEMS OF THE POET LAUREATE

Dr. Bridges is the Poet Laureate to-day, and has written many deep and learned poems. But in the two poems here he has written simply and tenderly for us to understand.

(i) GAY ROBIN IS SEEN NO MORE

GAY Robin is seen no more :
 He is gone with the snow,
 For winter is o'er
 And Robin will go.
 In need he was fed, and now he is fled
 Away to his secret nest.
 No more will he stand
 Begging for crumbs,
 No longer he comes
 Beseeching our hand
 And showing his breast
 At window and door :—
 Gay Robin is seen no more.

Blithe Robin is heard no more :
 He gave us his song
 When summer was o'er
 And winter was long .
 He sang for his bread and now he is
 Away to his secret nest.
 And there in the green
 Early and late
 Alone to his mate
 He pipeth unseen
 And swelleth his breast ;
 For us it is o'er :—
 Blithe Robin is heard no more.

ROBERT B.

(iii) A ROBIN

FLAME-throated robin on the topmost bough
Of the leafless oak, what singest thou?

Hark! he telleth how—

"Spring is coming now; Spring is coming now.

"Now ruddy are the elm-tops against the blue sky,
The pale larch donneth her jewelry.

Red fir and black fir sigh,

And I am lamenting the year gone by.

"The bushes where I nested are all cut down,
They are felling the tall trees one by one,

And my mate is dead and gone.

In the winter she died and left me lone.

"She lay in the thicket where I fear to go;

For when the March-winds after the snow

The leaves away did blow,

She was not there, and my heart is woe:

"And sad is my song, when I begin to sing.

As I sit in the sunshine this merry spring:

Like a withered leaf I cling

To the white oak-bough, while the wood doth ring.

"Spring is coming now, the sun again is gay;

Each day like a last Spring's happy day."

Thus sang he; then from his spray

He saw me listening and flew away.

ROBERT BRIDGES.

Questions.

1. Give another title to each of these poems.
2. Which is the sadder of these two poems? Which of all the birds do you think would sing the happiest song?
3. It would be interesting to make a collection of bird poems. Begin with this one, and add to it any you

poems you read about a thrush, a nightingale, a blackbird, a cuckoo, a wren.

4. Could you find better words for those printed in italic type?—

Flame-throated robin.

Ruddy are the elm-tops.

The *pale* larch.

The *white* oak-bough.

5. What do you notice about the rhymes in *Gay Robin is seen no more*?

21. THREE POEMS OF BLAKE

William Blake was a painter and mystic who lived in London over a hundred years ago. This beautiful poem is based on the Bible words, "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb . . . and the young lion and the fating together; and a little child shall lead them." Blake's interest in the simple things of Nature is illustrated here and in the next two poems. He linked night-time, the lion, the lamb, the fearful tiger with their gentle yet wondrous Creator.

(i) NIGHT

The sun descending in the west,
The evening star does shine:
The birds are silent in their nest,
And I must seek for mine.

The moon, like a flower,
In heaven's high tower,
With silent delight
Sits and smiles on the night.

Farewell, green fields and happy groves,
Where flocks have took delight.
Where lambs have nibbled, silent moves
The feet of angels bright,
Unseen they pour blessing,
And joy without ceasing,
On each bud and blossom,
And each sleeping lawn.

They look in every thoughtless nest,
Where birds are covered warm,
They visit caves of every beast,
To keep them all from harm
If they see any weeping
That should I have been sleeping,
They pour sleep on their head,
And sit down by their bed.

When wolves and tigers howl for prey,
 They pitying stand and weep;
 Seeking to drive their thirst away,
 And keep them from the sheep.
 But if they rush dreadful,
 The angels, most heedful,
 Receive each mild spirit,
 New worlds to inherit.

And there the lion's ruddy eyes
 Shall flow with tears of gold,
 And pitying the tender cries,
 And walking round the fold,
 Saying " Wrath, by his meekness,
 And, by his health, sickness
 Is driven away
 From our immortal day.

" And now beside thee, bleating lamb,
 I can lie down and sleep;
 Or think on Him who bore thy name,
 Graze after thee and weep.
 For, wash'd in life's river,
 My bright mane for ever
 Shall shine like the gold
 As I guard o'er the fold."

WILLIAM BLAKE.

Questions.

1. Why is this poem called *Night*?
2. What is the meaning of the following expressions?—
 " the moon, like a flower "; " every *thoughtless* nest ";
 " they *pour* sleep on their head "; " the lion's *ruddy*
 eyes." Do these phrases strike you as particularly
 vivid?
3. What is there noticeable about the *rhythm* of this
 poem?

(ii) THE LAMB

Little Lamb, who made thee?
 Dost thou know who made thee?
 Gave thee life, and bid thee feed,
 By the stream and o'er the mead;
 Gave thee clothing of delight,
 Softest clothing, woolly, bright;
 Gave thee such a tender voice,
 Making all the vales rejoice?
 Little Lamb, who made thee?
 Dost thou know who made thee?

Little Lamb, I'll tell thee,
 Little Lamb, I'll tell thee:
 He is called by thy name,
 For he calls himself a Lamb.
 He is meek, and He is mild;
 He became a little child,
 I a child, and thou a lamb,
 We are called by His name.

Little Lamb, God bless thee!

Little Lamb, God bless thee!

WILLIAM BLAKE.

Questions.

1. Why does this poem remind you particularly of *Night*? Which poem do you prefer?

2. What adjective would you apply to the matter and style of this poem? It is one of a number of poems which Blake called *Songs of Innocence*. Could you suggest why Blake gave his book that title?

(iii) THE TIGER

TIGER! Tiger! burning bright
 In the forests of the night,

What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, and what art
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And, when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand forged thy dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And water'd heaven with their tears,
Did He smile His work to see?
Did He who made the Lamb make thee?

Tiger! Tiger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

WILLIAM BLAKE.

Questions.

1. Does this poem make you feel *afraid* of the tiger? What words in it make the tiger seem awful?
2. Why does the poet say—(a) "*burning bright in the forests of the night*"; (b) "*thy fearful symmetry*"?
3. Describe in prose or in verse the following animals: the donkey; the cat; the lion.

22. THE FAIRIES

This is a delicate little song of a man who had a whimsical terror in the fairy world. He knew just where to find the les, what they were like, and what they had for supper lore the dawn made them hide away.

Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather!

Down along the rocky shore
Some make their home,
They live on crispy pancakes
Of yellow tide foam;
Some in the reeds
Of the black mountain-lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs,
All night awake.

High on the hill top
The old King sits;
He is now so old and gray
He's nigh lost his wits
With a ladder of white mist
Columbina he crosses
On his stately journeys
From Slieve Donard to Rosses;
Or going up with rhyme
On cold starry nights,
To top with the Queen
Of the gay Northern Lights.

re-tell it in your own words. What fairy legends do you know?

3. What (a) flowers, (b) animals or insects, are particularly connected with elves and fairies? Why?

4. What would you say about the rhythm of this poem? (Read the first part of the Introduction.)

24. TWO MODERN POEMS

These two poems were written by a poet who is living to-day. They are both full of delicate fancy. In the first one the poet sees and marvels at the miracle of nature that brings the hyacinth out of the earth, and in the other he tells us whimsically about the dairy of his dreams.

(i) HYACINTHUS

(In February)

In Autumn's dearth
Of warmth and mirth,
Take of kind earth
The fill of bowl,
And in it lay
Fair bulbs, and say,
"To this mere clay
Be living soul."

And now, behold,
I re green an I gold
To wood and wold
Abroad entice,
Pinks, whites and blues
Do fill your cruse
With scents and hues
Of Paradise.

In close knit twigs
Of wicker curls
Each bud unfolds
Revealed, apart
Recurled, I do add,
To match the lad
Of old who had
A quail's heart.

Cows of my raising,
White, red, and roan,
I'd have a-grazing
In fields of my own;
Milkers amazing,
Morning and night,
Cows of my raising,
Roan, red, and white.

I'd give the fairy
Cream, curd, and whey,
Best of my dairy
Fresh every day;
These shouldn't vary
Neath my door beam;
I'd give the fairy
Whey, curd, and cream.

PATRICK R. CHALMERS

Questions.

1. What words in the first poem give a good picture of the hyacinth? Find some words of your own that you could use to describe (a) a dahlia, (b) a bluebell, (c) a lily.

2. Who was Apollo? Do you know the legend of Hyacinthus? What other flower legends do you know?

3. How would you describe the metre of the first poem? Do you think it suits the subject?

4. What is the meaning of the fourth stanza of the first poem?

5. What do you notice about the second and last lines of each stanza in the second poem?

6. Does the second poem give you a good picture of the dairy? Which stanza appeals to you most? How does the poem give you an idea of the cleanliness of the dairy?

7. Who is the fairy in the second poem? Why does the fairy come up to it at all?

{ On Sundays I take my rest;
Church-going bells begin
Their low, melodious din;
I ~~rest~~ ^{fold} my arms on my breast,
And all is peace within.
HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW.

Questions.

1. Try to describe in simple language of your own (a) the windmill at work, (b) the windmill at rest. What two phrases best make these descriptions in the poem?
2. Why does a windmill always seem mysterious and romantic? Why does the poet call the windmill a giant?
3. Imagine that the miller talks to the windmill. What would he say?
4. Have you ever read a story of a man's fight with a windmill? If you have, tell the story in your own words.
5. The poet Longfellow was an American. What famous poem did he write? How could you tell that the poem printed here was written by an American?



TWO POEMS FROM PUNCH

The Dinosaur was a huge reptile, living at the very beginning of the world. Scientists have found the bones or skeletons of such beasts, and we can go to see them at the Natural History Museum, as the children do in the poem.

(i) THE DINOSAUR

LIKE some great bird with lifted beak
The gaunt old dragon stands;
His empty eye-holes seem to seek
Prey for his empty hands;
Something there is in him
Both humorous and grim.

Strange that beneath his hollow brows
Were eyes that once beheld
The warm pools and the dusky boughs
Of vague unfathomed eld,
And saw the dawn dim-pearled
Above a manless world.

He saw the forests hide the sun,
The waters fume and shrink,
And strange new creatures, one by one
Crawl to the oozy brink;
He felt the fierce hot rain
That smote the fern-slatted plain.

Now, peering o'er the little crowd
That clusters at his feet,
He does not hear its wonder loud,
Its laughter shrill and sweet,
Nor heed the merry sound
Of small boots clattering round.

Above the wondering babes he towers,
A beast remote and odd,

While they, like pink and golden flowers,
About him sway and nod
Before they patter past
Half-gleeful, half-aghast.

DOROTHY MARGARET STUART.

Questions.

1. In what kind of a world did the Dinosaur live? How long ago?
2. Imagine that the Dinosaur spoke to the children. What would he say?
3. What do you understand by "vague unfathomed eld"? Why is the dawn *dim-pearled*? Explain the lines:

"He felt the fierce hot rain
That smote the fern-shagged plain."

(ii) THE POTTER

In the olden days men of the various trades or crafts would cry out their wares in little songs, with quaint words and music. A modern writer imagines for us in this poem the song of the potter.

DAME, what can I make for you,
What would you have to-day?
Platter, cruse or pitcher new,
Or a trefoil cup or two
Wrought of finer clay—
Wrought with knops and circles,
Scallops, masks and sprays,
Covered over smooth and thick
With the good green glaze?
If the green glaze please you not,
Then you shall have the brown;
I can make a nut-brown pot,
It will not crack if it grow hot,
Nor if it tumble down;

I can mould and fashion
 Beauty out of mud
 As it folds around my wheel
 Like a lily-bud.

If old men's fingers wag for cold
 When winter winds blow keen,
 From the rough clay I can mould
 A plaited cage for them to hold
 With embers red between;
 Sweet water from the conduit
 My yellow pitchers catch,
 And in them comes the winking ale
 From the buttery-hatch.

Fear not, ye babes, to come to me;
 I love to hear your mirth;
 Pretty ones, draw near and see,
 I have cocks and cows for ye
 Scarce a finger's girth;
 I have little coffers
 Wherein to keep your groats,
 Some like helmets, some like towers,
 Some like pigeon-cotes.

DOROTHY MARGARET STUART.

Questions.

1. Try to make a picture of some of the things the potter says he can make. What would you like him to make for you?

2. "I can mould and fashion
 Beauty out of mud."

What does this mean? Turn to the poem on p. 72; is that also about beauty out of mud?

3. Try to make up a verse for (a) the tinker, (b) the baker, (c) the carpenter, (d) the watchmaker, to sing.

4. Where in the Bible can you read about a potter? Find and learn the passage.

27. BLOW, BLOW, THOU WINTER WIND ✓

The play *As You Like It*, in which this song is sung, is a play of life in the forest, where a man's friends are the trees, and the sky, and the wind. Shakespeare thinks of man's ingratitude as a worse thing than the bitterest weather.

Blow, blow, thou winter wind,
Thou art not so unkind
As man's ingratitude;
Thy tooth is not so keen
Because thou art not seen,

Although thy breath be rude.

Heigh ho! sing heigh ho! unto the green holly.
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly.
Then, heigh ho! the holly!
This life is most jolly.

Freeze, freeze, thou bitter sky,
That dost not bite so nigh
As benefits forgot
Though thou the waters warp,
Thy sting is not so sharp
As friend remember'd not.

Heigh ho! sing heigh ho! unto the green holly:
Most friendship is feigning, most loving mere folly
Then, heigh ho! the holly!
This life is most jolly.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

Questions.

1. What is the chorus of this song? What is its purpose?

I can mould and fashion
 Beauty out of mud
 As it folds around my wheel
 Like a lily-bud.

If old men's fingers wag for cold
 When winter winds blow keen,
 From the rough clay I can mould
 A plaited cage for them to hold
 With embers red between;
 Sweet water from the conduit
 My yellow pitchers catch,
 And in them comes the winking ale
 From the buttery-hatch.

Fear not, ye babes, to come to me;
 I love to hear your mirth;
 Pretty ones, draw near and see,
 I have cocks and cows for ye
 Scarce a finger's girth;
 I have little coilers
 Wherein to keep your groats,
 Some like helmets, some like towers,
 Some like pigeon-cotes.

DOROTHY MARGARET STUART

Questions.

1. Try to make a picture of some of the things the potter says he can make. What would you like him to make for you?

2. "I can mould and fashion
 Beauty out of mud."

What does this mean? Turn to the poem on p. 71, is that also about beauty out of mud?

3. Try to make up a verse for (a) the tinker, (b) the baker, (c) the carpenter, (d) the watch-maker, to use

4. Where in the Bible can you read about a potter? Find and learn the passage.

28. WHEN ICICLES HANG BY THE WALL

Shakespeare often remembered Stratford-on-Avon, the home of his boyhood, when he was writing plays in London. This little song from *Love's Labour's Lost* pictures a cold morning in the village, as Shakespeare thought of it when a boy.

When icicles hang by the wall,
 And Dick the shepherd blows his nail,
 And Tom bears logs into the hall,
 And milk comes frozen home in pail,
 When blood is nipp'd, and ways be foul,
 Then nightly sings the staring owl,
 To-whit!

To-who!—a merry note,
 / While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

When all aloud the wind doth blow,
 And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
 / And birds sit brooding in the snow,
 / And Marian's nose looks red and raw,
 / When roasted crabs lust in the bowl,
 / Then nightly sings the staring owl,
 To-whit!

To-who!—a merry note,
 While greasy Joan doth keel the pot.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

Questions

1. Have you ever noticed these sights and sounds on a winter day in the country? Why does winter in town differ from winter in the country?

2. Whom do Dick and Tom, Marian and Joan represent?

3. Do you think the refrain to this little song is effective? What is the meaning of its last line?

29. A SEA DIRGE

This is a beautiful little song sung by the spirit Ariel in *The Tempest*. Ariel means that the movement of the sea would change even a drowned man into "something rich and strange."

FULL fathom five thy father lies ;
 Of his bones are coral made ;
 Those are pearls that were his eyes ;
 Nothing of him that doth fade
 But doth suffer a sea-change
 Into something rich and strange,
 Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell :
 Hark ! now I hear them,—
 Ding, dong, bell.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.

Questions.

1. What beautiful things do you know of that are moulded and fashioned by the movement of the sea?
2. What is a dirge? What kind of music would you set to this poem? How does the poem sound as you read it?
3. What were the sea nymphs? Do you know any legends concerning the sea?

31. BLOW, BUGLE, BLOW

This is generally called "The Bugle Song." Its language is very beautiful and musical; and above all, seems to give the effect of the echo of a bugle sounding over the hills. A visit to the Lakes of Kullarney suggested the poem to Tennyson.

*The splendour falls on castle walls
And snowy summits old in story:
The long light shakes across the lakes,
And the wild cataract leaps in glory.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.*

*O hark, O hear! how thin and clear,
And thinner, clearer, farther going!
O sweet and far from cliff and scar
The horns of Elfland faintly blowing!
Blow, let us hear the purple glens replying:
Blow, bugle; answer, echoes, dying, dying, dying.*

*O love, they die in yon rich sky,
They faint on hill or field or river:
Our echoes roll from soul to soul,
And grow for ever and for ever.
Blow, bugle, blow, set the wild echoes flying,
And answer, echoes, answer, dying, dying, dying.
LORD TENNYSON.*

Questions.

1. How does the poet get the effect of the echo?
2. What particular beauty can you trace in the following lines?—

- (a) "The long light shakes across the lakes."
- (b) "And thinner, clearer, farther going."
- (c) "The horns of Elfland faintly blowing."

3. What do you notice about the rhymes in this poem?

32. FROM THE ANCIENT MARINER

These two passages give us a fine idea of the imagination of the poet Coleridge, and of the simple beauty of his language. In the first we have the loveliness of the sea under the moon—a thing to be seen; and in the second what Shakespeare calls the "concord of sweet sounds." The second passage is perhaps the most musical poetry in the whole of English literature.

(i) THE WATER-SNAKES BY MOONLIGHT

THE moving moon went up the sky
And nowhere did abide;
Softly she was going up,
And a star or two beside—

Her beams bemoock'd the sultry main,
Like April hoar-frost spread;
But where the ship's huge shadow lay,
The charmed water burnt alway
A still and awful red.

Beyond the shadow of the ship,
I watch'd the water-snakes :
They moved in tracks of shining white,
And when they rear'd, the elfish light
Fell off in hoary flakes.

Within the shadow of the ship
I watch'd their rich attire :
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,
They coil'd and swam; and every track
Was a flash of golden fire.

O happy living things ! no tongue
Their beauty might declare :
A spring of love gush'd from my heart.

And I bless'd them unaware:
 Sure my kind saint took pity on me,
 And I bless'd them unaware.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

(ii) SWEET SOUNDS

Sometimes a-dropping from the sky
 I heard the skylark sing;
 Sometimes all little birds that are,
 How they seem'd to fill the sea and air
 With their sweet jargoning!

And now 'twas like all instruments,
 Now like a lonely flute;
 And now it is an angel's song,
 That makes the Heavens be mute.

It ceased; yet still the sails made on
 A pleasant noise till noon,
 A noise like of a hidden brook
 In the leafy month of June,
 That to the sleeping woods all night
 Singeth a quiet tune.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

Questions.

1. Try to make a picture of the scene described in the first passage.
2. The Ancient Mariner, all alone on a ship amongst dead men, is speaking in the first passage. Why does he speak as he does of the water-snakes?
3. Choose three *words* from the first passage that give you in themselves a good picture of the water-snakes.
4. Why are the following words or phrases effective in the second passage?—"a-dropping from the sky"; "jargoning"; "a lonely flute"; "the leafy month of June"; "sleeping woods"; "a hidden brook."

5. Suppose the three stanzas of the second passage were set to music. What kind of music would suit them? What instruments would be used?

6. Describe for yourself the noise a brook makes in summer. Would its music be different in winter? What other music do you know of in Nature?

A FIRST BOOK

33. TO AUTUMN

In the first stanza of this poem Keats pict-
as the time of harvest, of ripened fruit; in the
personifies Autumn as the gleaner; and in the
shows how Autumn's music is as sweet and be-
of Spring.

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness
Close bosom-friend of the maturing s
Conspiring with him how to load and bl
With fruit the vines that round the
run;

To bend with apples the moss'd cottag
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the
To swell the gourd, and plump the
With a sweet kernel; to set buddin
And still more, later flowers for the b
Until they think warm days will nee
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd
cells.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid the
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad
Ther sitting careless on a granary fl
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winne
Or on a half reap'd furrow sound a
Drowsed with the fume of poppe
Spurs the next swath and
powers;

And sometimes like a gleaner thou
Steady thy laden head across a
Or by a sickle press, with patient
Thou watchest the last oar

Where are the songs of Spring?
they?

Think not of them, thou hast
While barred clouds bloom the
With the at all the same

hen in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river shallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn;
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden-croft,
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.
JOHN KEATS.

Questions.

1. Find and quote :

- (a) two good " pictures " ;
- (b) two passages that reveal *colour* ;
- (c) two good musical passages from the poem.

2. Does Keats think of Autumn as a season of sorrow or as a season of joy? Is there anything sad about this poem?

34. THE QUESTION

This is a poem of beautiful flowers. Shelley has surrounded many of the "lilies of the field" with his own picturesque fancy; and has ended with his unanswerable question.

I DREAM'D that as I wander'd by the way
Bare Winter suddenly was changed to Spring,

And gentle odours led my steps astray,
Mix'd with a sound of waters murmuring
Along a shelving bank of turf, which lay
Under a copse, and hardly dared to fling

Its green arms round the bosom of the stream,
But kiss'd it and then fled, as thou mightest in
dream.

There grew pied wind-flowers and violets,
Daisies, those pearl'd Arcturi of the earth,

The constellated flower that never sets;
Faint oxlips; tender blue-bells, at whose birth
The sod scarce heaved; and that tall flower that
wets—

Like a child, half in tenderness and mirth—
Its mother's face with heaven's collected tears,
When the low wind, its playmate's voice, it hears.

And in the warm hedge grew lush eglantine,
Green cow-bind and the moonlight-colour'd may,
And cherry-blossoms, and white cups, whose win
Was the bright dew yet drain'd not by the day

And wild roses, and ivy serpentine
With its dark buds and leaves, wandering astr
And flowers azure, black, and streak'd with gold,
Fairer than any waken'd eyes behold.

And nearer to the river's trembling edge
 There grew broad flag-flowers, purple pranked with
 white,
 And starry river buds among the sedge,
 And floating water-lilies, broad and bright,
 Which lit the oak that overhung the hedge
 With moonlight beams of their own watery light;
 And bulrushes, and reeds of such deep green
 As soothed the dazzled eye with sober sheen.

Methought that of these visionary flowers
 I made a nosegay, bound in such a way
 That the same hues, which in their natural bowers
 Were mingled or opposed, the like array
 Kept these imprison'd children of the Hours
 Within my hand,—and then, elate and gay,
 I hasten'd to the spot whence I had come,
 That I might there present it—O! to Whom?

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

Questions.

1. There are some famous flower-passages in English
 e.g.—

- (a) In Milton's *Lycidas*: "Bring the rat
 printrose."
- (b) In Shakespeare's *Midsummer Night's Dream*
 ("I know a bank whereon the wild thyme
 blows"); and in *A Winter's Tale* ("Diffused
 that come before the swallows dare").
- (c) In Tennyson's *In Memoriam*.

Read these passages and compare them with this poem.

2. (a) Can you imagine an answer to Shelley's
 question?

- (b) What does he mean by "these imprisoned children of the Hours"?
- (c) Find the adjectives which are applied to the various flowers in the poem and write a note on their *aptness* and *picturesqueness*.

35. THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

Matthew Arnold, the author of this poem, was the son of the famous Dr. Arnold whom we meet in *Tom Brown's Schooldays*. He was a learned man, and wrote many poems and books that we should find difficult to understand. But in this poem he has caught for us the magic of "sea-change" and the homeliness of earth with its "little grey church on the windy hill."

COME, dear children, let us away :

Down and away below !

Now my brothers call from the bay

Now the great winds shoreward blow ;

Now the salt tides seaward flow ;

Now the wild white horses play,

Champ and chafe and toss in the spray.

Children dear, let us away !

This way, this way !

Call her once before you go.

Call once yet

In a voice that she will know :

" Margaret ! Margaret ! "

Children's voices should be dear

(Call once more) to a mother's ear :

Children's voices, wild with pain—

Surely she will come again.

Call her once and come away ;

This way, this way !

" Mother dear, we cannot stay."

The wild white horses foam and fret.

Margaret ! Margaret !

Come, dear children, come away down !

Call no more !

One last look at the white-walled town,

And the little grey church on the windy shore.

Then come down.

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- (5) What does he mean by "these imprisoned children of the Hours"?
- (6) Find the adjectives which are applied to the various flowers in the poem and write a note on their aptness and picturesqueness.

35. THE FORSAKEN MERMAN

Matthew Arnold, the author of this poem, was the son of the famous Dr. Arnold whom we meet in *Ten Brown's Schoolboys*. He was a learned man, and wrote many poems and books that we should find difficult to understand. But in this poem he has caught for us the magic of "sea-change" and the homeliness of earth with its "little grey church on the windy hill."

Come, dear children, let us away :
 Down and away below !
 Now my brothers call from the bay
 Now the great winds shoreward blow ;
 Now the salt tides seaward flow ;
 Now the wild white horses play,
 Champ and chase and toss in the spray.
 Children dear, let us away !
 This way, this way !

Call her once before you go.
 Call once yet
 In a voice that she will know :
 " Margaret ! Margaret ! "
 Children's voices should be dear
 (Call once more) to a mother's ear :
 Children's voices, wild with pain—
 Surely she will come again.
 Call her once and come away ;
 This way, this way !
 " Mother dear, we cannot stay "
 The wild white horses foam and fret.
 Margaret ! Margaret !
 Come, dear children, come away down !
 Call no more !
 One last look at the white-walled town,
 And the little grey church on the windy slope
 Then come down.

She will not come though you call all day.
Come away, come away !

Children dear, was it yesterday
We heard the sweet bells over the bay ?
In the caverns where we lay,
Through the surf and through the swell,
The far-off sound of a silver bell ?
Sand-strewn caverns, cool and deep,
Where the winds are all asleep ;
Where the spent lights quiver and gleam ;
Where the salt weed sways in the stream ;
Where the sea-beasts, ranged all round,
Feed in the ooze of their pasture-ground ;
Where the sea-snakes coil and twine,
Dry their mail and bask in the brine ;
Where great whales come sailing by,
Sail and sail, with unshut eye,
Round the world for ever and ay ?
When did music come this way ?
Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, was it yesterday
(Call yet once) that she went away ?
Once she sate with you and me,
On a red gold throne in the heart of the sea,
And the youngest sate on her knee.
She comb'd its bright hair, and she tended it well.
When down swung the sound of the far-off bell.
She sigh'd, she look'd up through the clear green sea ;
She said : " I must go, for my kinsfolk pray
In the little grey church on the shore to-day.
'Twill be Easter-time in the world—ah me !
And I lose my poor soul, Merman, here with thee."
I said : " Go up, dear heart, through the waves !
Say thy prayer, and come back to the kind sea-
caves ! "
She smiled, she went up through the surf in the bay.
Children dear, was it yesterday ?

Children dear, were we long alone?
"The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan.
Long prayers," I said, "in the world they say.
Come!" I said, and we rose through the surf in the
bay.
We went up the beach, by the sandy down
Where the sea-stocks bloom, to the white-walled
town.
Through the narrow paved streets, where all was still,
To the little grey church on the windy hill.
From the church came a murmur of folk at their
prayers,
But we stood without in the cold blowing airs.
We climbed on the graves, on the stones, worn with
rains,
And we gazed up the aisle through the small-leaded
panes.
She sat by the pillar; we saw her clear:
"Margaret, hie! come quick, we are here.
Dear heart," I said, "we are long alone.
The sea grows stormy, the little ones moan."
But, ah, she gave me never a look,
For her eyes were sealed to the holy book!
Loud prays the priest; shut stands the door.
Come away, children, call no more!
Come away, come down, call no more!

Down, down, down!
Down to the depths of the sea!
She sits at her wheel in the humming town,
Singing most joyfully.
Hark, what she sings: "O joy, O joy,
For the humming street, and the child with its toy!
For the priest, and the bell, and the holy well—
For the wheel where I spun,
And the blessed light of the sun!"
And so she sings her fill,
Singing most joyfully,

Up the still, glistening beaches,
Up the creeks we will hie,
Over banks of bright seaweed
The ebb-tide leaves dry.
We will gaze, from the sand-hills,
At the white, sleeping town;
At the church on the hill-side—
And then come back down.
Singing: "There dwells a loved one,
But cruel is she!
She left lonely for ever
The kings of the sea."

MATTHEW ARNOLD.

Questions.

1. Who is speaking in this poem? Who was Margaret? Why did she wish to go back to the earth at Easter-time?
2. Does this poem remind you at all of Ariel's little song on p. 78? If so, quote the part which reminds you of it particularly.
3. What stories or legends do you know concerning mermaids?

General Questions.

1. Write down three nursery rhymes from memory. Draw a picture to illustrate each of them.

2. Why are you able to remember nursery rhymes so well? Which could you learn more readily—twenty lines of verse or fifteen lines of prose? Why so?

3. Which poems in this book tell a story? Would you prefer to have these stories written in prose?

4. Try to make a verse of your own to begin the story of (a) *Red Riding Hood*; (b) *The Dog in the Manger*; (c) *The Argonauts*. Be sure that your lines have rhythm (see the Introduction), and that they rhyme correctly.

5. Write down as many words as you can that will rhyme with the following words: *sky, gold, leaf, hill, sorrow, house*.

The following pairs of words do not make true rhymes:

dayquay,
winddummed,
morndawn.

Why not? What seems to you to be necessary for a true rhyme?

6. You often see little rhymes on advertising posters, e.g.

THE SUN SMILES MOST
ON THE SOUTHERN COAST.

Try to make up a rhyme for a poster.

7. When you get an opportunity read Robert Browning's famous poem *The Pied Piper of Hamelin*. There are some queer and clever rhymes in it. Write them down.

8. Here are three passages of verse printed in prose form. Write them out carefully in verse form.

(a) A widow bird sate mourning for her love upon a wintry bough; the frozen wind crept on above, the freezing stream below. There was no leaf upon the forest bare, no flower upon the ground, and little motion in the air except the mill-wheel's sound.

(Note that there is one rhyme in this poem which is not quite perfect: *bough . . . below*.)

(b) [This passage is taken from Longfellow's *Hiawatha*, which does not rhyme. You will see an example of its rhythm on p. 13.]

Hidden in the alder-bushes, there he waited till the deer came, till he saw two antlers lifted, saw two eyes look from the thicket, saw two nostrils point to windward, and a deer came down the pathway, flecked with leafy light and shadow. And his heart within him fluttered, trembled like the leaves above him, like the birch-leaf palpitated, as the deer came down the pathway.

(c) She left the web, she left the loom, she made three paces through the room, she saw the water-lily bloom, she saw the helmet and the plume, she look'd down to Camelot. Out flew the web and floated wide; the mirror crack'd from side to side. "The curse is come upon me," cried the Lady of Shalott.

9. Write down—

(a) Ten words that you think musical in sound; e.g. *gleaming, forlorn*.

(b) Ten words whose sound suggests their meaning; e.g. *rattle, splash*.

Why do poets use such words? Use the words that you have written down, in good sentences of your own.

10. Which words in the two following passages seem to you particularly poetic or musical? Try to say why they seem so to you.

(a) I steal by lawns and grassy plots,
I slide by hazel-covers;
I move the sweet forget-me-nots
That grow for happy lovers
I slip, I slide, I gloom, I glance
Among my skimming swallows;
I make the netted sunbeams dance
Against my sandy shallows
I murmur under moon and stars
In brambly wildernesses,
I linger by my shingly bars;
I loiter round my treasuries.

(b) The curlew tolls the knell of parting day,
The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
The plowman homeward plods his weary way,
And leaves the world to darkness and to me
Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds.

11. In each of the blank spaces in the following passage insert a good word of your own. The lines rhyme in pairs. Remember that your words should keep the rhythm of the poem:

Three, chauntress, oft the woods among
I woo, to hear thy ———,
And, mingling thee, I walk ———
On the dry ——— green,
To behold the ——— moon,
Kissing near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led ———
Through the heaven's ——— pathless way.

And oft, as if her head she —
 Stooping through a — cloud.
 Oft, on a — of — ground,
 I hear the — curfew sound,
 Over some — shore,
 Swinging slow with — roar.

12. Write down carefully what you might imagine—
- (a) in passing through a thick wood on a dark windy night;
 - (b) about a little thatched house with a crooked chimney;
 - (c) on looking at a scare-crow covered with frost;
 - (d) as you sat by the side of a tiny brook that is afterwards to become a great river;
 - (e) on finding mushrooms in a meadow;
 - (f) if you heard a strange sound at your bedroom window on Christmas Eve.

13. Describe these things as beautifully as you can:
- (a) full moon behind the trees;
 - (b) a little boat with white sails on a river;
 - (c) clouds on a windy day;
 - (d) an express train dashing through a quiet station;
 - (e) the wind blowing on a corn-field;
 - (f) apple-blossom.

14. Who are the thieves in the following poem?
- Over the hills, from far,
 The thieves stole in to-night,
 A clouded moon and a lonely star
 To make their candle-light.
- Nightlong as I lay a-dream,
 Not quiet, as thieves should be,
 They wrought with shout and shriek and scream
 Their noisy burglary.

But out of dark and cold
 The great sun came at dawn;
 So the frightened thieves have left their gold
 And treasure on our lawn!

When I woke up, I stood
 Amidst the loot of the thieves,—
 Conkers and acorns and sticks of wood,
 And a pile of golden leaves.

Try to write something fanciful about—

- (a) frost on the window-pane;
- (b) snow in the night;
- (c) thunder;
- (d) a shattered rose. / /

NOTES

[These notes have been specially written for the Indian edition of this book and are not the work of the original editors]

R. S. HAWKER (1803-75) was a poet and antiquary, who lived in and wrote of the county of Cornwall.

London Tower; on the north side of London Bridge, used now partly as a museum, partly as a barracks. Its interesting historical associations make it a favourite resort for visitors.

Michael's hold; the old castle picturesquely crowning St. Michael's Mount, off the south coast of Cornwall, occupying a position almost impregnable before the days of modern artillery.

London Wall; portions of the Roman wall which used to surround London may still be seen, and the positions of the old gates can be detected from names like Aldgate, Fishergate, Aldergate, etc., now districts in the city.

2

SIR F. H. S. DOYLE (1810-1888) succeeded Matthew Arnold as Professor of Poetry at Oxford.

(The English soldier, whose capture by the Chinese in 1860 is recorded here, refused to kneel to his captors, and was immediately executed.)

never had's before; i. e. was content to live for the moment only.

To-day; contrasted with *last night*.

Signs; Lord Elgin was at the time British Ambassador to China.

Roslin ; or Rosslyn, near Edinburgh.

leads the ball ; takes the leading place in the opening dance.

ladys ; the older English and poetical spelling. The *y* stands for an Old English *g*, the word originally, being *hlæf-dige*, she who kneads ('doughs') the bread ('leaf').

the ring they ride ; the fight in the tournament. Note the alliteration in this ballad. Alliteration was the chief metrical device of older English poetry, and ballads are either old narrative songs or are written in imitation of them.

Dryden's groves of oak ; Dryden's estate near Rosslyn, famous for an avenue of oaks. Hawthornden is also in the neighbourhood.

pienet ; pinnacle or turret.

with candle, with book, and with knell ; i. e. with the full rites of the Christian church. The prose phrase is *with bell, book and candle*, all three of which played their part in the ceremonial service.

5

(From *Rosely*, III, xvi.)

Brigwall ; Brignall, Greta and Dalton Hall all lie in the same neighbourhood in the North Riding of Yorkshire.

read ; The old English word meant literally to *interpret, discern, make out*, and the older shade of meaning survives in a few phrases ; cf. 'read between the lines,' and the use of the word in the next stanzas of this poem.

Ranger ; name given to keeper of park or estate.

tuck ; old form of 'touch'.

mickle ; old English and now Scottish* dialect word for *great*. cf. the proverb : 'Many a little makes a mickle.'

The fiend whose lantern lights the mead ; the will-o'-the-wisp, the phosphorescent light sometimes seen on swampy ground : also called Jack-o'-lantern. Cf. note on *H'aler-Sprite* above.

6

THOMAS CAMPBELL (1777-1844), of whose work only a few poems are still popularly enjoyed. Campbell played an important part in the founding of London University.

a silver pound, a portion of silver used once to be the equivalent of £1

Lochyle ; for the pronunciation of *Loch*, see note to *Castle Broomfield* under 4. *Lochyle* and *Ull's Isle* lie near Mull off the west coast of Scotland.

myght ; person ; a word reserved now for use in poetry.

water-wraith ; see note to *Water-sprite* under 4.

dearer ; *dearer* is a poetic form of the more usual *dearer*. Note that the rhymes in this poem are alternatively single and double, sometimes called *masculine* and *feminine*.

7

Lord Byron (1789-1824), author of *Childe Harold*

(For the story of this poem see the Bible, *II Kings*, ch. xix, *II Chronicles*, ch. xxxii, both of which give accounts of King Hezekiah's spirited defence against the Assyrians. Thus did the king address his people of Judah. "Be strong and courageous, be not afraid or dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him, for there be more with us than with him ; with him is an arm of flesh ; but with us is the Lord our God to help us and to fight our battles.")

cohorts ; really a name of a division of the Roman army.

Angel of Death ; "And the Lord sent an angel, which cut off all the mighty men of valour, and the leaders and captains in the camp of the king of Assyria."—*II Chron.* xxxii, 21 ; cf. *II Kings*, xix, 35.

widows of Ashur ; Sennacherib was killed by his sons after his return from the unsuccessful war against Judah while worshipping in a temple of Assyrian gods. Baal and Ashur are names of Assyrian gods. Ashur being the great national deity, is taken here to stand for Assyria itself.

brole ; an unusual form of the past participle 'broken' now scarcely used except in the slang expression *brole* meaning 'ruined financially.' For the poetical *anastrophe* too we should write *unwritten* in modern English prose. These unusual forms are permitted, by what is known as poetic license, to poets who have to meet the demands of metre.

8

SIDNEY DOWELL (1824-1874), poet and critic, a pioneer of what is now known as 'co-operation' in trade.

shadowy kine; i. e. they too are ghosts. One Old English way to mark the plural was to add the suffix *-en* (as *ox*, *oxen*). Another was to change the root vowel (as *man*, *men*). Both ways are used in this word, for the Old English word was *cy*, plural *cy*, double plural *cyen* (*kine*).

stiles; stiles dividing fields are favourite meeting and resting places for country folk.

hock-bells; students who have read Shakespeare know how popular were the sports of falconry and hawking in olden days in Britain.

burnie; diminutive of *burn*.

9

WILLIAM COWPER (1731-1800), one of the heralds of the great so-called romantic group of 19th century English poets, which includes Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Scott, Shelley and Keats.

(The *Royal George* was a battleship which sank off Portsmouth in 1782. More than half of her crew, including Admiral Kempenfelt, were drowned.)

Toll; church bells are 'toll'd', 'made to ring', in slow measured time, to celebrate a person's death.

overset; turned over. That she was 'overset' was the official account, but it seems to be a fact that she sank because of leaks brought on by her 'unsound timbers'.

weigh; lift, cf. the phrase 'the anchor's weighed'.

10

JAMES HOOE, (1770-1835), of lowly birth, and familiarly known as 'the Ettrick Shepherd'. He was befriended by Sir Walter Scott.

hoo-gorn; *hoo* is the same word (Old English *hoga*) as *hodge*.

the play; 'the play' would ordinarily mean in English 'the drama'. We should say in modern English 'from play', or 'from their games'.

II

POETRY HISTORY (1211-1671), takes us back again almost to the days of Shakespeare. All Herrick's great poetical successes were in the form of short songs.

little. This is one of Herrick's favourite words; it occurs four in this poem. He wrote in fact a fascinating poem founded on the word, beginning 'A little must best fit a little shrine.'

buttery, a pantry for stores.

unfused, unfused, unchained. Or it may be an old dialect word *unfused* meaning unforked, clean.

gale, cooked vegetables.

roots; herbs.

porcelain, one particular kind of herb used in salads; the Latin botanical name for the genus is *portulaca*.

incense, the ceremonial spice burnt in certain religious services. Here it is the pleasing smell of the cooked food which acts as incense, and drives the poet to acknowledge the food as God's good gift.

12

ALLAN CUNNINGHAM (1754-1842), author of the *Songs of Scotland*.

sheet; the rope by which a sail is hauled in.

tight; understand with before this line. *tight* means *fostered* tight so as to be impervious to water.

horns; alluding to the extremities of the waxing or waning moon.

oak; 'Hearts of oak' was the old and popular name given to the wooden ships which composed England's navy.

13

couple; a couple (Latin *copula*) is properly the leash used for tying two hunting dogs together. We still speak of the 'coupling' of railway carriages.

knelling; ordinarily used of a bell, and of a bell rung for a sad occasion.

diamonds; the sparkles of dew; cf. the use of *pearls* at the end of 16.

brought to bay; a curious idiom. *bay* is barking. The deer is brought up against the bounds which bay, but the phrase also suggests 'no escape', because of the other meaning of *bay*, *race*.

14

T. L. PRACOCK (1785-1866), wrote some very learned novels, full of discussion. This poem, which is a trio, written to be sung, comes from his novel called *Nightmare Abbey*.

(The nursery rhyme is :

Three wise men of Gotham
Went to sea in a bowl,
And if the bowl had been stronger
My song would have been longer.

Gotham, near Nottingham, was famous for the foolishness of its inhabitants—they were just the kind of people who would try 'to rake the moon out of the sea'. The idea is derived perhaps from the old story of a farmer's wife who mistook the reflection of the moon in the water for a cheese, and tried to get it out with a rake.)

Jove's deities; Jupiter (Jove) is the planet of happy influence; cf. the adjective *jovial* which means *cheerful*.

ballast; (*bare-last*) i. e. the least load a ship must carry to keep stable. *Last* is a word still used for a kind of weight.

15

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770-1850). His poetry is peculiarly, as all poetry is generally, imaginative. Coleridge wrote of Wordsworth's share in the *Lyrical Ballads* (1798) to which both poets contributed, that 'Wordsworth was to give the charm of novelty to things of everyday life by awakening the mind's attention to the loveliness and wonders of the world before us'. And note that Wordsworth here takes two of the simplest kind of incidents, yet is able so to clothe them that they thrill us with their beauty.

(1)

strain; lit. the pull or tension on anything, used figuratively of a piece of music or poetry.

numbers; poetical words & verses. Herrick's poem (No. 11) is from a collection of his more pious verses entitled *Noble Numbers*.

(II)

Lake; Ulswater in the Lake District.

sprightly, are acts on *Water-Sprite* is 4—spirited or lively. The dancing of the daffodils infects the poet's mind, so that all things seem in his imagination to be dancing with happiness.

Fair; beautiful. The Old English word for beauty was *frickhood*.

even-song; the evening service of the Church of England; Morning prayer is 'matins'.

pearls; see note to *diamonds* under 13.

17

(Cf. with this Herrick's well known lines beginning:—
 'Gather ye rosebuds while ye may
 Old time is still a flying,
 And the same flower that smiles to-day
 Tomorrow will be dying.')

Ye; strictly the nominative plural of the second personal pronoun. Now only retained for special, chiefly poetical, uses.

arks; covered boxes; Noah's Ark was a covered vessel, in which he was saved, according to the story in the Old Testament, from the universal flood.

cowlips; see the account of cowlips in No. 23, last six lines

round; i. e., a round dance.

crown'd; cf. Tennyson's popular poem about the 'Queen of the May.' The 'Queen' was the girl chosen to act as such in the May games at the spring festival.

18

ROBERT BROWNING (1812-1889), whose longer poems are so packed full of thought that they are often difficult to understand, wrote also the most delightful, and often the simplest, of songs.

(i)

Now that April's there ; When spring has reclothed all the fields and trees and flowers with new life

the little children's dower ; English meadows look all yellow with buttercups in April. The melon too is yellow, but its colour has not the brilliancy of the common buttercup, for all the melon's richness and tropical luxuriance.

(ii)

Cape Saint Vincent ; off which in 1797 Admiral Jervis defeated the Spaniards.

reeling ; lit. smeking ; but used sometimes of blood. The effect of the sunset on the sea was that of a great smear of blood.

Odís Bay ; where Sir Francis Drake boldly entered and burnt some of the ships of the Spanish Armada in 1587.

Trafalgar ; the word is here to be accented on the second syllable—the scene of Nelson's famous naval victory in 1805.

Gibraltar ; whose capture (1704) and repeated defence play so prominent a part in English history.

If loss turns as I ; The sense will be clear if this line and the preceding one are transposed in thought.

19

S. T. COLERIDGE (1772-1834). Unlike Wordsworth, Coleridge's imagination led him to write of other worldly scenes. See note on 'Wordsworth' above.

(This poem was written in Germany, and in imitation of a German folk-song. Coleridge himself called it, 'something [somewhat] childish, but very natural'.)

20

ROBERT FRINGERS (1844-), practised as a doctor of medicine until 1882

Is sweet as was fed; 'little Robin Redbreasts', as children like to call them, are happy enough in winter time in England to pick up the crumbs thrown them by kindly people.

As bread, which is conspicuously red—see the epithet which begins the next poem.

(ii)

do-met; *d-m* (do-on), and *d-off* (do-off) are words only used in poetry now.

21

(i)

WILLIAM BLAKE (1757-1827). A critic has said of him: "He was the first child to be a poet, the first poet to be a child. He did not merely sing childhood; rather childhood sang in him as it never sang before or since. He was the first evangelist of youth."

And there the lion's ruddy eye; i. e. in the 'new worlds'. See the quotation in the introduction to the poem (p. 59 above) which is from *Isaiah*, ch. XI, 6.

Him who bore thy name; see second stanza of next poem. Jesus Christ is called 'the Lamb of God'—cf. *John*, ch. I, 29, 36, in reference to his sacrifice of Himself, just as the 'lamb without spot or blemish' was an ordained beast of sacrifice among the Jews.

(ii)

It's are called by His name; cf. *John*, ch. XXI, 15.

(iii)

threw down their spears; i. e. as a token of peace.

22

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM (1824-1889), an Irishman who came to London, and became editor of a famous magazine.

rushy; suggesting the rushes growing beside the stream—the glen or valley.

red cap ; shaped like a cone. All these, with silver shoes, make up the legendary fairy equipment.

reeds ; fairies were supposed to fashion their arrows from reeds.

nigh ; the old positive degree of near.

Shiueleanne ; a *slane* (Gaelic) is a mountain. The places named are all Irish.

Northern lights ; the Aurora Borealis, or 'northern dawn' ; a wonderful illumination of the atmosphere, spreading from the North Pole, and supposed, according to Scandinavian legend, to be the sign of merry-making among the spirits.

stole ; the fairies were supposed sometimes to steal human children, substituting a fairy or elf child in their place.

flag-leaves ; reeds or rushes.

23

* WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564-1616). Shakespeare's sonnets and songs, many of them hidden away in the famous plays, are too often lost sight of in the greatness of his dramatic work.

(This is a fairy song from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, II, i. The scene is a wood, and the song is Titania's reply to Puck's opening question : 'How now, Spirit. Whither wander you?')

Thorough ; and *through* derive from the same Old English word. The second syllable of the former was short, and so was dropped unless the word was used emphatically. *Thorough* is now the adjective, *through* the preposition.

moones ; -es was the commonest genitive ending of Old English nouns—modern English 's.

sphere ; track, traversing, so 'speed upon her track'.

orbs upon the green ; rings of darker grass, actually the work of fungi, but according to old superstition, caused by the dancing of fairies.

pensioners ; retainers, gentlemen attendants.

favours ; love tokens. The mediæval knight wore the 'favour' of his chosen lady.

pearl ; as an ear-ring.

21

PATRICK R. CHALMERS, a Scotsman who combines an aptitude for business—he is a director of the Mercantile Bank of India—with a talent for poetry.

(i)

(" Hyacinthus, son of the Spartan King Amyclas, was a beautiful youth, beloved by Apollo and Zephyrus. He returned the love of Apollo; but as he was once playing at quoits with the god, Zephyrus, out of jealousy, caused the quest of Apollo to strike the head of the youth, and kill him on the spot. From the blood of Hyacinthus there sprang the flower of the same name (hyacinth), in the leaves of which appeared the exclamation of woe *AI AI* or the letter *Y* being the initial of (*Hyacinthus*..."—*Smith's Classical Dictionary*. The story may be found in *Ovid's Metamorphoses*, Bk. X.)

The fill of ... ; enough to fill a . .

the lad of old ; Hyacinthus, see story above.

Our Lord of Song ; Apollo was the god of song as well as the god of the sun.

Could column rare, etc ; ' could any graven monument be a better memorial of grief ? ' The flower even appears to bear an epitaph of woe. See story above.

(ii)

stool ; milking stool.

I'd hars to beg ; ' I should become as poor as a beggar.'

tenty ; a Scottish dialect word for 'attentive'; *attend* is a word found very frequently in the poetry of Burns.

Nenth my door beam ; *my* is emphasised. The fairy comes to the door, standing beneath the beam overhead, and takes her gifts ; cf. the phrase 'cross my threshold'.

25

H. W. LONGFELLOW (1817-1892), the kindly and upright American poet, author of *Hiawatha*, *Evangeline*, etc.

(For an illustration of the kind of English windmill sung of here, see the publishers' sign on the title page of books

published by Messrs. Heinemann. The sails stand as high again as the mill itself and make a prominent and picturesque landmark to be seen from many miles distant in the flat districts where such mills are generally found.)

whichever way it may blow ; the head of the mill, so to speak, to which the sails are attached, is mechanically contrived to revolve round, so that the sails always meet the wind

Church-going bells ; an elliptical phrase standing for 'bells ringing for church-going'.

26

DONOTHY MARGARET STUART, author of *Sword Songs*, is a well known contributor, signing herself 'D. M. S.', to the pages of *Punch*. Most Indian students know this weekly illustrated paper which offers a humorous commentary on contemporary affairs as they appear to Englishmen.

(A reconstructed model of the dinosaur is shown at the Natural History Museum in South Kensington, London, where it has become a favourite 'awful joy' to crowds of children. The word means literally terrible lizard—the model stands as high as a big tree.)

old ; An old English, now only poetical, word for 'old age'.

Crawl to the very brink ; as the new race of amphibious creatures first began.

(ii)

(From a series *Songs of the Ancient Crafts in Historical Songs and Ballads*, published by Messrs George G. Harrap & Co., Ltd.)

trefoil : foil is the Latin word *folium* (English *folio*) a leaf. A trefoil cup is one ornamented with a three leaf device.

leaps ; leap is an almost obsolete word meaning bud.

glaze ; the glassy substance with which pottery is fired and covered.

soap ; an old English word for shale ; found commonly in the Bible and Shakespeare.

plated ; pronounce *platal*.

groats ; a small silver coin, worth about sixpence, in use in England up to the seventeenth century.

A FIRST BOOK

27

(See *As You Like It*, II, vi.)

unskilful; *kind* is the old English word for *Nature*. So that *kind here* means *natural*.

raw; in the older sense of *raw* or *harsh*.

This life; in the forest where 'unskilful' man is not found.

up; i. e. to one's heart.

wrap; out from their normal liquid condition.

28

(Sung by Winter at the end of *Love's Labour Lost*.)

Stumps his nail; because his fingers have grown numb with cold; or it may possibly mean 'stiles', 'sidgets': cf. 'kicks his heels'.

ways be foul; paths are muddy.

cool; 'make to cool': cf. *heal*=to make whole.

loud; very loud.

saw; saying; moralising.

crabs; crab-apples, wild apples about the size of grapes.

29

(*Tempest*, I, ii.)

dirige; an interesting word. The first word of the Latin prayer for the dead is *dirige*=direct ('O God direct us').

Six fathoms; a measure (six feet) used in sounding depth of water.

Nothing of him, etc. i. e. all his body, which seems to disappear gradually away, is transformed into substances of beauty.

Behind them; singing behind the stage.

30

LORD TENNYSON (1809-1892), poet laureate and author of *Idylls of the King*.

(This is a song from *The Princess* (1847), a poem which celebrated the coming of higher education of women in England.)

31

shales; describing the shimmering of the air.

horns of Elfland; fairy pipes.

32

(The story of *The Ancient Mariner* is well known. The mariner and his shipmates were made to undergo all kinds of terrible experiences, because he had shot an albatross. He repented of his cruelty to one of God's creatures, but the very sincerity of his repentance made him anxious to tell his tale to all he could get to listen.)

benock'd; because moon-beams suggest cold.

charmed; as if under the influence of magic.

water-snails; described in an earlier part of the poem—slimy things that crawled 'with legs upon the slimy sea'.

hoary; the water falling off their bodies sparkled like frost in the moonlight.

my kind saint; according to the Roman Catholic religion each man has his guardian saint.

(ii)

jargoning; In Chaucer's time (14th century) *jargon* was used, as here, of the talk of fools. Properly it has no bad meaning, but it is now applied to any kind of nonsensical 'gibberish'.

33

JOHN KEATS (1795-1821), whose short life did not prevent the highest poetical achievement. His longest poems are *Endymion* and *Hyperion*, but his Odes of which this is one, show perhaps the finest of his work.

maturing; making to mature or ripen.

slack-edges; eaves are the overhanging edges of the roof.

Hours; The *Hours* were the Roman maiden-goddesses of the weather. Their children are the flowers which 'kept the same hours,' etc.

35

MATTHEW ARNOLD (1822-1888). See introduction to poem p. 89 above.

Merman; *mere* is the regular Old English word for sea. The merman (like the mermaid) is a mythological creature half human, half fish.

white horses; waves with white crests.

spent lights; the light was dimmed by the depth of the caverns.

Easter time; at Easter occur the most solemn of the festivals of the Christian Church, celebrating the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

sea-stocks; a kind of gilly flowers.

small-leaded; the glass of the windows was broken up into small panes held with leads.

sealed; fixed.

Holy well; new springs and wells were extremely valuable discoveries in mediæval England, as elsewhere in primitive times, and superstition endowed them, whether their waters possessed any special health giving properties or not, with religious sanctity. 'Holy' wells are commonly found still in England, though the local superstitions attached to them have died away.

spring-tides; the exceptionally 'high' and 'low' tides which occur shortly after new and full moons.

Broom; a yellow flowered shrub often found on the sea-shore.

